

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Previously presented) An $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole, wherein:

R_1 is a linear or branched C_1 - C_{12} -alkyl group, or a cyclic C_3 - C_{12} -alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1 - C_{12} alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkyl group, a cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkylene group, a phenyl group, and a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkyl group, the cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups; and

R_2 and R_3 are hydrogen.

2. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein R_1 is a linear or branched C_1 - C_6 -alkyl group, or a cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1 - C_6 -alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3 - C_5 -alkyl group, a cyclic C_3 - C_5 -alkylene group, a phenyl group, or a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3 - C_5 -alkyl group, the cyclic C_3 - C_5 -alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

3. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein R_1 is a linear, branched, or cyclic C_4 -alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_4 -alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a cyclic C_3 -alkyl group or a cyclic C_3 -alkylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3 -alkyl group or the cyclic C_3 -alkylene group is further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

4. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.

5. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.5.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled).

8. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt is the *tert*-butylammonium salt of omeprazole.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt is crystalline.

11. (Previously presented) A process for preparation of an $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to any one of claims 1-5, 8, or 10, which comprises the steps of:

- a) dissolving omeprazole in an organic solvent;
- b) adding an $\text{NR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3$ -compound and precipitating the desired salt; and
- c) isolating and drying the obtained salt of omeprazole.

12. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 11, wherein the organic solvent is acetonitrile or *tert*-butyl methyl ether.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

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15. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to any one of claims 1-5, 8, or 10 as active ingredient in association with pharmaceutically acceptable excipients [and optionally one or more additional therapeutic ingredients].

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently amended) A method for inhibiting [the treatment of a] gastric acid secretion [related condition] comprising administering to a patient suffering from the condition a therapeutically effective amount of the $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt according to any one of claims 1-5, 8, or 10.

18. (Previously presented) An $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole, wherein:

R_1 is a linear or branched C_1 - C_{12} -alkyl group, or a cyclic C_3 - C_{12} -alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1 - C_{12} alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkyl group, a cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkylene group, a phenyl group, and a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkyl group, the cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups; and

R_2 and R_3 are hydrogen.

19. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein R_1 is a linear or branched C_1 - C_6 -alkyl group or a cyclic C_3 - C_6 -alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1 - C_6 alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3 - C_5 -alkyl group, a cyclic C_3 - C_5 -alkylene group, a phenyl group, or a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3 - C_5 -alkyl group,

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the cyclic C₃-C₅-alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

20. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein R₁ is a linear, branched, or cyclic C₄-alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C₄-alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a cyclic C₃-alkyl group or a cyclic C₃-alkylene group, and wherein the cyclic C₃-alkyl group or the cyclic C₃-alkylene group is further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

21. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.

22. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.5.

23. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt is the *tert*-butylammonium salt of esomeprazole.

24. (Previously presented) The $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt is crystalline.

25. (Previously presented) A process for preparation of an $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to any one of claims 18-24, which comprises the steps of:

- a) dissolving esomeprazole in an organic solvent;
- b) adding an $\text{NR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^-$ compound and precipitating the desired salt; and
- c) isolating and drying the obtained salt of esomeprazole.

26. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 25, wherein the organic solvent is acetonitrile or *tert*-butyl methyl ether.

27. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to any one of claims 18-24 as active ingredient in association with pharmaceutically acceptable excipients [and optionally one or more additional therapeutic ingredients].
28. (Currently amended) A method for inhibiting [the treatment of a] gastric acid secretion [related condition] comprising administering to a patient suffering from the condition a therapeutically effective amount of the $\text{NHR}_1\text{R}_2\text{R}_3^+$ salt according to any one of claims 18-24.
29. (New) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 15 or 27 further comprising one or more additional therapeutic ingredients.